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NOVEMBER 27, 1958

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FROM: BERLIN

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 416, NOVEMBER 27, 9 PM

PRIORITY

SENT BONN 367, DEPARTMENT 416 REPEATED INFORMATION PARIS 77,  
MOSCOW 129, LONDON 64, POLAD USAREUR 140

PARIS ALSO PASS USCINCEUR THURSTON AND WEST.

GENERAL BERLIN REACTION TO PRESS REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY'S  
STATEMENT RANGES FROM DISBELIEF TO DISMAY AND DOWNRIGHT ANGER.

FEDREP FONOFF REP IN BERLIN, BREER, CAME SEE ME THIS MORNING  
ON INSTRUCTIONS FEDREP BERLIN REP VOCKEL. BREER SAID REPORTS  
FROM WASHINGTON ON BERLIN HAVE CAUSED GREAT DISTURBANCE IN  
OFFICIAL AND PUBLIC MIND HERE. BREER EXPRESSED GRAVE CONCERN  
THAT BY INDICATING WILLINGNESS DEAL GDR OFFICIALS AS AGENTS  
SOVIETS, WE WERE TAKING FATEFUL STEP WHICH MUST INEVITABLY  
LEAD TO NEGOTIATIONS WITH PANKOW AND EVENTUAL RECOGNITION GDR.  
IF GDR OFFICIALS HOLD UP SURFACE ACCESS, OR IF GDR PLANES WERE  
FORCE DOWN ALLIED PLANE, WE WOULD BE OBLIGED NEGOTIATE WITH  
THEM. HE COULD NOT RPT NOT UNDERSTAND ALLEGED STATEMENTS  
ABOUT WESTERN AGREEMENT ON MATTER. BREER ALSO MADE GENERAL REMARK  
ABOUT DANGERS OF APPEASEMENT POLICY IN DEALING WITH SOVIETS,  
IMPLYING DEALING WITH GDR OFFICIALS UNDER SOVIET PRESSURE  
WOULD BE FIRST STEP. HE CONCLUDED THAT WHILE BERLINERS WERE  
TOUGH, THEY REGARDED US AS KEYSTONE MAINTENANCE OF THEIR  
FREEDOM, AND INDICATIONS SOFTNESS ON OUR PART WOULD HAVE  
DISASTEROUS EFFECT WEST BERLIN MORALE.

SENAT, TRADE UNION AND OTHER INFORMED PERSONS WERE UNANIMOUS  
IN THEIR CONSTERNATION.

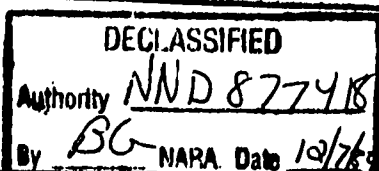
DR GEFAELLER

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DR CEFAELLER, LEADING OFFICIALS IN BERLIN ALL-GERMAN AFFAIRS MINISTRY, SAID THAT THIS IS TURNING POINT IN EUROPEAN HISTORY, FROM NOW ON SOVIETS WILL HAVE ONE SUCCESS AFTER ANOTHER. A RESPONSIBLE TRADE UNION OFFICIAL STATED HIS TELEPHONE HAS BEEN RINGING ALL MORNING AS SHOCKED FRIENDS HAVE CALLED HIM TO DEPLORE IMPLICATIONS THEY SEE IN STATEMENTS.

SEVERAL BERLINERS IN RESPONSIBLE POSITIONS SAID THEY WERE HOPING AGAINST HOPE THAT SECRETARY HAD BEEN MISQUOTED, AND THAT THIS WOULD BE MADE CLEAR IN NEXT FEW HOURS. IF NOT, THEY SAID, NOTHING LESS THAN DISCLAIMER BY PRES EISENHOWER COULD OVERCOME MORALE-SHATTERING EFFECTS OF STATEMENTS.

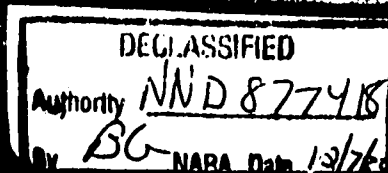
DISBELIEF WAS VOICED BY SEVERAL RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS BECAUSE THEY COULD SEE NO RPT NO PURPOSE IN STATEMENT. DELAY IN TRANSMITTAL OF SOV NOTE ON BERLIN, FORCED REVERSAL IMPLICIT IN GROTEWOHL STATEMENT AND OTHER INDICATIONS POINTED, THEY THOUGHT, TO STRONG POSSIBILITY THAT SOVS MIGHT BE REALIZING THEY BIT OFF MORE THAN THEY COULD CHEW, AND WERE SEEKING WAYS TO BACK OUT OF EXTREME DEMANDS WITH MINIMUM LOSS OF FACE. IN ANY EVENT, THEY COULD SEE NO REASON TO GIVE AWAY MAJOR POINT BEFORE SOVS EVEN PRESENTED SPECIFIC DEMANDS AND DETAILED PLANS. "THE SOVS JUST POCKET SUCH A CONCESSION," ONE OFFICIAL SAID, "AND GO ON TO MAKE FURTHER DEMANDS."

SEVERAL PERSONS EXPRESSED ASTONISHMENT THAT REFERENCES HAD BEEN MADE TO FEDREP'S TRADE AGREEMENTS WITH SOVZONE AS JUSTIFICATION FOR ALLIED DEALINGS WITH EAST GERMANS EVEN AS "SOVIET AGENTS." FEDREP, THEY SAID, DOES NOT RPT NOT HAVE LEGAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITY WITH REGARD TO BERLIN COMPARABLE TO THOSE OF OCCUPYING POWERS.

A TRADE UNION OFFICIAL REMARKED THAT IN ALL THE YEARS SINCE 1945, EVEN DURING THE TRIALS AND DANGERS OF THE BLOCKADE, BERLINERS HAVE NEVER HAD SUCH A FEELING THAT THEY ARE BEING ABANDONED BY THEIR FRIENDS AS THEY HAVE NOW. BOTH HE AND OTHER TRADE

UNIONISTS

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UNIONIST SAID THAT THE BERLINERS, IF FORCED TO CHOOSE, WOULD FAR PREFER THE TENSION AND RISK OF EVEN TOTAL BLOCKADE AND AIRLIFT, IF CONFIDENT THAT AMERICA WAS AS FULLY DETERMINED TO PRESERVE FREEDOM OF BERLIN AS IN 1948-49, TO A "CRUMBLING AWAY OF AMERICAN SUPPORT, BIT BY BIT." NO ONE IN BERLIN HAS ANY ILLUSIONS, SEVERAL SAID, BUT THAT BERLIN'S FREEDOM HINGES ENTIRELY ON AMERICAN DETERMINATION TO STAND BY THE CITY.

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